

DRESSER NEWS



One of my favourite Dresser pieces

I was introduced to the work of Christopher Dresser back in the early 2000's by a now good friend who had already spent many years studying and collecting his designs. Having an interest in art and design, I had already been collecting contemporary pottery, as well as prints and paintings. Since then my main interest in Dresser has been his designs for Linthorpe and Ault, though I have also managed to acquire a few pieces of metalware and glass.

This small silver plate 'sugar' bowl by James Dixon & Sons of Sheffield is a favourite of mine which has been part of my collection for about ten years. I love the simple form, reminiscent of much of his work, and small size. I have shown it to other collectors and academics over the years, but no one, so far, has seen this shape before, not even in the Dixon archive. It is fully marked, (see below) both with the Dixon stamp and Dresser facsimile and was most likely designed as part of a tea set. Or could it have been a one off or prototype?

Any thoughts are welcomed.

Ian Robinson

“A Potted History”

Members might be interested to know that 'Travel Editions' have added a new tour called 'A Potted History: One hundred years of British Ceramics' which took place in York 8-10 July 2025. Christopher Dresser's work and influence featured strongly during the three days. The tour lecturer who accompanied us throughout, was Dr. Maddie (Madeline) Hewitson, Research associate in the History of Art Department, at the University of York. After a welcome reception Maddie gave us an excellent introductory talk: '*The First Designer: Christopher Dresser and the rise of Victorian Ceramics*', it was followed by a three course meal at our hotel, the Middletons in Skeldergate, York.



Dr Maddie at York Art Gallery's 'Wall of Women'

We spent the next day in Middlesbrough, the morning at the Dorman Museum, where Louise introduced the Christopher Dresser Linthorpe Pottery collection and told us about its history. We had lunch at the newly restored Zetland, a railway hotel built in 1893, its interior decorated with impressive Craven Dunnill Jackfield tiles.



Proposed Autumn Visit to the Potteries

Over the years, the Society has organised visits to various institutions and private collections, including the National Museum of Scotland, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Ashmolean Museum, the V&A, and the Victor Murphy Trust. Members have enjoyed expert insights and exclusive behind the scenes tours, and we hope to continue providing these opportunities.

We are currently planning an autumn visit to the heart of the British ceramics industry in Stoke on Trent. This location offers easy access to several key sites, including the Minton Archive, the Gladstone Pottery Museum, and the World of Wedgwood. Additionally, we may include a trip to the Jackfield Tile Museum in Telford. If this visit interests you or if you can assist with the planning, please get in touch.



In the afternoon we visited Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (MIMA), founded in 2007, and from 2017 part of Teesside University. We saw the ceramic collection comprising about 600 objects from mid to late 20th century, beginning with Bernard Leach and his followers. In the evening Maddie gave us a pre-dinner talk 'The Studio Pottery Movement: Form, Status and Design', in preparation for the following day.

On Thursday morning we visited York Art Gallery, to see the exhibits in the Centre for Ceramic Arts (CoCA), and in the afternoon we were driven in a much needed air conditioned coach to Cannon Hall, near Barnsley, where we saw a collection of lustre glazed pieces by William and Evelyn De Morgan dating from the last quarter of the 19th century. Also pieces by Gertrude Spencer-Stanhope 1857-1944, daughter of Sir Walter Spencer-Stanhope owner of Cannon Hall. Our potted history event finished in York about 5.30 pm.

Our thanks go to our tour manager Gill Thompson for organising the event, and to Maddie Hewitson for sharing her in-depth knowledge and enthusiasm for ceramics with us. Travel Editions feature the same 'potted history' in their 2026 brochure and I can whole heartedly recommend it.

Susan Stuart.



Cannon Hall

We love to receive contributions from our members - if you'd like to get in touch with any short articles, to help Ian with his sugar bowl, or to express interest in the proposed Autumn trip, please contact me on valharrison@live.co.uk